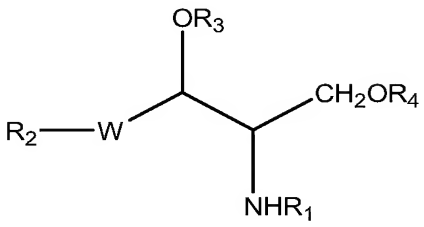
Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-29 (Cancelled).

30 (Currently Amended). A compound of formula (I):



wherein

R_1 represents a hydrogen, a branched or linear alkyl, aryl, alkylamine, or a group $-C(O)R_5$;

R_2 and **R_5** represent, independently, a branched or linear C_{10}-C_{24} alkyl, alkenyl or polyenyl ~~groups~~group;

R_3 and **R_4** are, independently, a group $-C(O)-NR_6R_7$, in which **R_6** and **R_7**, being the same or different for R_3 and R_4, ~~and~~ represent, independently, a hydrogen, or a saturated or unsaturated branched or linear polyalkylamine, wherein one or more amine units in said polyalkylamine may be a quaternary ammonium; or **R_3** is a hydrogen; or **R_3** and **R_4** form, together with the oxygen atoms to which they are bound, a heterocyclic ring comprising $-C(O)-NR_9-[R_8-NR_9]_m-C(O)-$, in which **$R_8$** represents a

saturated or unsaturated C_1-C_4 alkyl and **R_9** represents a hydrogen or a polyalkylamine of the formula $-[R_8-NR_9]_n-$, wherein said R_9 or each alkylamine unit R_8NR_9 may be the same or different in said polyalkylamine; and **n** and ~~**m**~~ represent, independently, an integer from 1 to 10; and

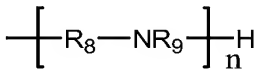
W represents ~~a group selected from~~ -CH=CH-, $-CH_2-CH(OH)-$ or $-CH_2-CH_2-$.

31 (Previously Presented). The compound of Claim 30, wherein R_1 represents a $-C(O)R_5$ group, R_5 being as defined.

32 (Currently Amended). The compound of Claim 30, wherein said R_2 and R_5 represent, independently, a linear or branched C_{12}-C_{18} alkyl or alkenyl ~~groups~~group.

33 (Previously Presented). The compound of Claim 30, wherein W represents -CH=CH-.

34 (Currently Amended). The compound of Claim 30, wherein **R_1** represents a $-C(O)R_5$ group; **R_5** represents a C_{12}-C_{18} linear or branched alkyl or alkenyl; **W** represents -CH=CH-; **R_2** represents a C_{12}- C_{18} linear or branched alkyl or alkenyl; ~~**R_1**~~ **R_3** and **R_4** represent, independently, a group -C(O)-NR_6R_7, and **R_3** may also represent a hydrogen, wherein **R_6 and R_7** represent, independently, a hydrogen or a polyalkylamine having the general formula (II):



wherein

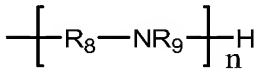
R_8 represent a C_1-C_4 alkyl;

R_9 represents a hydrogen or a polyalkylamine branch of formula (II), said R_8 and R_9 may be the same or different for each alkylamine unit, $-R_8NR_9-$, in the polyalkylamine of formula (II); and

n represents an integer from 3 to 6.

35 (Previously Presented). The compound of Claim 34, wherein R_3 is a hydrogen atom.

36 (Currently Amended). The compound of Claim 30, wherein **R_1** represents a $-C(O)R_5$ group; **R_5** represents a C_{12}- C_{18} linear or branched alkyl or alkenyl; **W** represents -CH=CH-; **R_2** represents a C_{12}- C_{18} linear or branched alkyl or alkenyl; **R_3** and **R_4** represent, independently, a group $-C(O)-NR_6R_7$, wherein **R_6 and R_7** represent, independently, an alkylamine or a polyalkylamine having the general formula (II):



wherein

R_8 ~~represent~~ represents a C_1-C_4 alkyl;

R_9 represents a hydrogen or a polyalkylamine branch of formula (II), said R_8 and R_9 may be the same or different for each alkylamine unit, $-R_8NR_9-$, in the polyalkylamine of formula (II); and

n represents an integer from 3 to 6.

37 (Currently Amended). The compound of Claim 30, wherein **R_1** represents a $-C(O)R_5$ group; R_5 represents a C_{12}-C_{18} linear or branched alkyl or alkenyl; **W** represents -CH=CH-; **R_2** represents a C_{12}-C_{18} linear or branched alkyl or alkenyl; **R_3** and **R_4** form, together with the oxygen atoms to which they are bonded, a heterocyclic ring comprising $-C(O)-[NH-R_8]_n-NH-C(O)-$,

wherein

R_8 represents a C_1-C_4 alkyl, wherein for each alkylamine unit having the formula $-NH-R_8-$, said R_8 may be the same or different; and

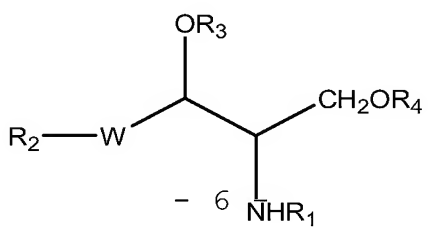
n represents an integer from 3 to 6.

38 (Previously Presented). The compound of Claim 30, wherein said R_8 is a C_3-C_4 alkyl.

39 (Previously Presented). The compound of Claim 30, being N-palmitoyl D-erythro sphingosyl-1-carbamoyl spermine.

40 (Cancelled).

41 (Currently Amended). A process for the preparation of a sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugate of formula (I)



wherein

R_1 represents a hydrogen, a branched or linear alkyl, aryl, alkylamine, or a group $-C(O)R_5$;

R_2 and **R_5** represent, independently, a branched or linear C_{10}-C_{24} alkyl, alkenyl or polyenyl ~~groups~~group;

R_3 and **R_4** are, independently, a group $-C(O)-NR_6R_7$, in which **R_6** and **R_7**, being the same or different for R_3 and R_4, ~~and~~ represent, independently, a hydrogen~~,~~ or a saturated or unsaturated branched or linear polyalkylamine, wherein one or more amine units in said polyalkylamine may be a quaternary ammonium; or

~~**R_3 represents a hydrogen; or**~~

R_3 and **R_4** form together with the oxygen atoms to which they are bound a heterocyclic ring comprising $-C(O)-NR_9-[R_8-NR_9]_m-C(O)-$, in which **$R_8$** represents a saturated or unsaturated C_1-C_4 alkyl and **R_9** represents a hydrogen or a polyalkylamine of the formula $-[R_8-NR_9]_n-$, wherein said R_9 or each alkylamine unit R_8NR_9 may be the same or different in said polyalkylamine; and **n** and **m** represent, independently, an integer from 1 to 10; and

W represents ~~a group selected from~~ $-CH=CH-$, $-CH_2-CH(OH)-$ or $-CH_2-CH_2-$;

the process ~~comprises~~comprising:

(a) providing a sphingoid compound of formula (I) wherein R_1, R_2 and W have the meaning as defined above and R_3 and R_4 represent, independently, a hydrogen atom or an oxo protecting group, wherein at least one of said R_3 and R_4 represent a hydrogen atom;

(b) reacting said compound of step (a) with an ~~activating~~ agent for activating the hydroxyl moieties of OR_3 and/or OR_4, optionally in the presence of a catalyst, to obtain an activated OR_3 and/or OR_4 group;

(c) reacting said activated sphingoid compound with a polyalkylamine; and

(d) removing said protecting group, thereby obtaining said sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugate of formula (I) as defined above.

42 (Previously Presented). The process of Claim 41, wherein said sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugate is N-palmitoyl D-erythro sphingosyl-1-carbamoyl spermine.

43 (Currently Amended). The process of Claim 41, wherein said protecting group is a primary amine protecting group selected from the group consisting of trifluoroacetamide, fmoc, carbobenzoxy (CBZ), and dialkyl ~~Phosphoramidates~~phosphoramidates.

44 (Currently Amended). The process of Claim 41, wherein said activating agent is ~~selected from~~ N,N'-

disuccinimidylcarbonate, di- or tri-phosgene or an imidazole derivative.

45 (Currently Amended). The process of Claim 41, wherein said activation is performed in the presence of a catalyst, the catalyst being ~~selected from~~ 4-dimethylamino pyridine (DMAP), tetrazole, dicyanoimidazole or diisopropylethylamine.

46 (Previously Presented). The process of Claim 41, for obtaining a di-substituted sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugate, wherein

in step (a) both R_3 and R_4 are hydrogen atoms, and said process comprises reacting the compound of formula (I) with at least two equivalents of polyalkylamine to obtain a disubstituted sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugate, with identical polyalkylamine substituents.

47 (Currently Amended). The process of Claim 41, for obtaining a di-substituted sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugate, wherein

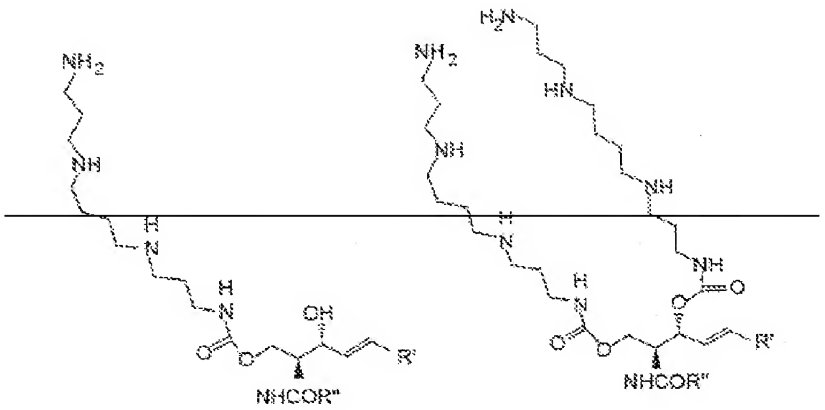
in step (a) at least one of R_3 or R_4 is protected with a protecting group, the process comprises reacting in step (c) the activated sphingoid compound with a first polyalkylamine; removing the protecting group of R_3 or R_4 to obtain an unprotected oxo group; reacting the unprotected compound with an activating agent to obtain an activated mono-substituted

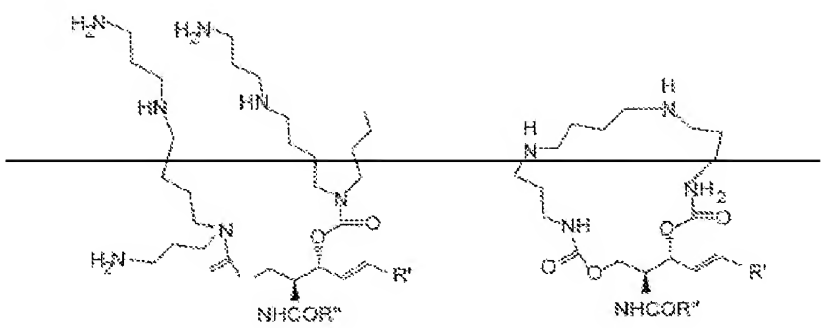
sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugate; and reacting said activated mono-substituted sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugate with a second polyalkylamine, thereby obtaining a di-substituted sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugate, in which said first and second polyalkylamine may be the same or different.

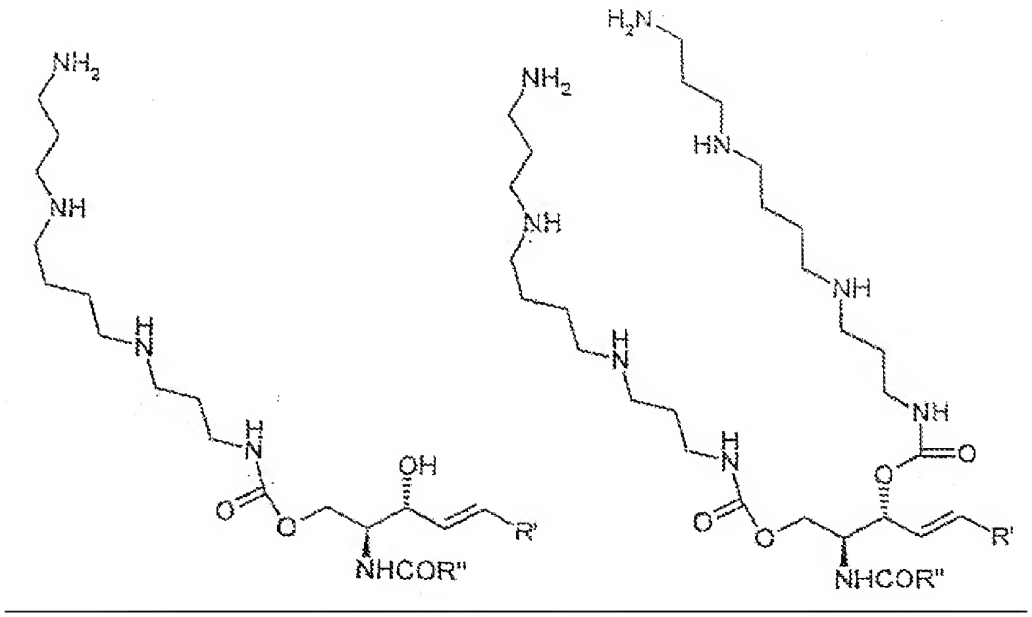
48 (Previously Presented). The process of Claim 41, for obtaining a heterocyclic sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugate, wherein

in step (a) both R_3 and R_4 are hydrogen atoms, said sphingoid compound is reacted with at least two equivalents of an activating agent to obtain an activated sphingoid with both R_3 and R_4 activated and reacting said activated sphingoid compound with less than an equivalent of polyalkylamine, thereby obtaining a heterocyclic sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugate.

49 (Currently Amended). The process of Claim 41, for obtaining any one of the sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugates as follows:




H2N
H2N
HN
HN
N
O
H2N
N
R'
NHCOR"
H
N
H
N
NH2
O
NH
O
O
O
R'
NHCOR"


NH2
NH
H
N
H
N
OH
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R'
NHCOR"
H2N
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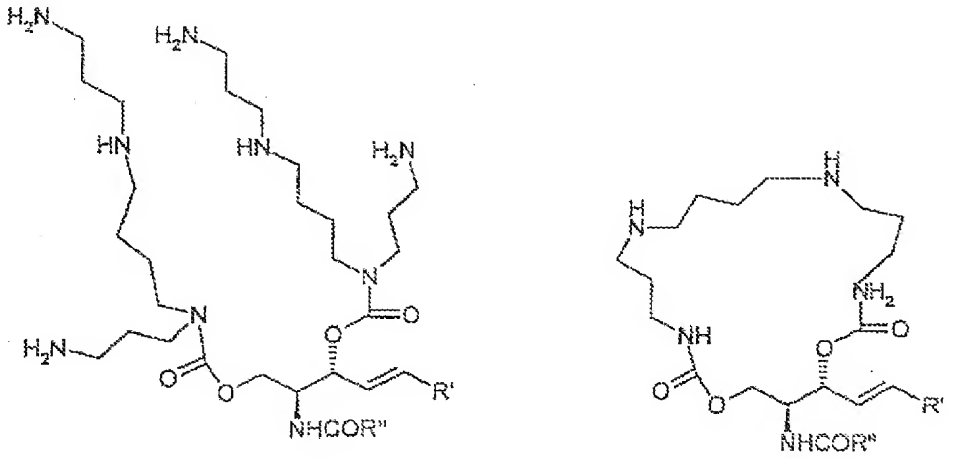
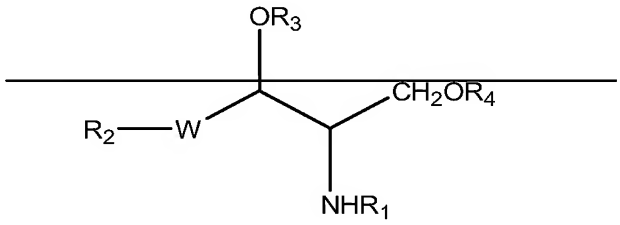


50 (Withdrawn-Currently Amended). A composition comprising a sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugate in accordance with claim 20, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier ~~of the formula (I):~~



~~wherein~~

~~**R_1** represents a hydrogen, a branched or linear alkyl, aryl, alkylamine, or a group $-C(O)R_5$;~~

~~**R_2** and **R_5** represent, independently, a branched or linear C_{10}-C_{24} alkyl, alkenyl or polyenyl groups;~~

~~**R_3** and **R_4** are independently a group $-C(O)-NR_6R_7$, **R_6** and **R_7** being the same or different for R_3 and R_4 and represent, independently, a hydrogen, or a saturated or unsaturated~~

~~branched or linear polyalkylamine, wherein one or more amine units in said polyalkylamine may be a quaternary ammonium; or~~

~~R_3 is a hydrogen; or~~

~~R_3 and R_4 form together with the oxygen atoms to which they are bound a heterocyclic ring comprising $-C(O)-NR_9-[R_8-NR_9]_m-C(O)-$, R_8 represents a saturated or unsaturated C_1-C_4 alkyl and R_9 represents a hydrogen or a polyalkylamine of the formula $-[R_8-NR_9]_n-$, wherein said R_9 or each alkylamine unit R_8NR_9 may be the same or different in said polyalkylamine; an~~

~~n and m are independently an integer from 1 to 10;~~

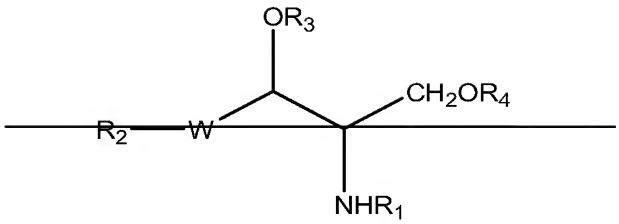
~~W represents a group selected from $-CH=CH-$, $-CH_2-CH(OH)-$ or $-CH_2-CH_2-$.~~

51 (Cancelled).

52 (Withdrawn). The composition of Claim 50, wherein said sphingoid-polyalkylamine conjugate is N-palmitoyl D-erythro sphingosyl-1-carbamoyl spermine.

53 (Withdrawn). The composition of Claim 50, further comprising a biologically active molecule.

54 (Withdrawn-Currently Amended). In the method of capturing a molecule having a negative charge, a negative dipole or a local negative dipole with a conjugate capable of capturing said molecule by electrostatic interaction, the improvement wherein said conjugate is a compound in accordance with claim 30~~ of formula (I):~~



~~wherein~~

~~**R_1** represents a hydrogen, a branched or linear alkyl, aryl, alkylamine, or a group $-C(O)R_5$;~~

~~**R_2** and **R_5** represent, independently, a branched or linear C_{10}-C_{24} alkyl, alkenyl or polyenyl groups;~~

~~**R_3** and **R_4** are independently a group $-C(O)-NR_6R_7$, **R_6** and **R_7** being the same or different for R_3 and R_4 and represent, independently, a hydrogen, or a saturated or unsaturated branched or linear polyalkylamine, wherein one or more amine units in said polyalkylamine may be a quaternary ammonium; or~~

~~**R_3** is a hydrogen; or~~

~~**R_3** and **R_4** form together with the oxygen atoms to which they are bound a heterocyclic ring comprising $-C(O)-NR_9-[R_8-NR_9]_m-C(O)-$, **$R_8$** represents a saturated or unsaturated C_1-C_4 alkyl and **R_9** represents a hydrogen or a polyalkylamine of the formula $-[R_8-NR_9]_n-$, wherein said R_9 or each alkylamine unit R_8NR_9 may be the same or different in said polyalkylamine; and **n** and **m** are independently an integer from 1 to 10;~~

~~**W** represents a group selected from $-CH=CH-$, $-CH_2-CH(OH)-$ or $-CH_2-CH_2-$.~~

55 (Withdrawn). The method of Claim 54, wherein said compound is N-palmitoyl D-erythro sphingosyl-1-carbamoyl spermine.

56-58 (Cancelled)

59 (Previously Presented). The compound of Claim 34, wherein R_3 and R_4 represent the same or different polyalkylamine.